1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M34

man without a single enemy", Arabs have called him 157 554 to me.

I was Mishal's guest for several weeks. In the company 231 of his son Naif, I was able to look over a large number 435 ● of Arab horses amongst the different Shammar clans. One two-year-old Saqlawi-Shaifi stallion of purest blood pleased me exceedingly. One day I enquired of the *sheykh's* secretary if he thought it possible that Mishal would sell this stallion. It had indeed come to my ears that Mishal had refused an offer of eight hundred gold pounds from the French Remount Service. From my experience, I knew that really thoroughbred Arab horses were quite rare and therefore exceedingly expensive. Considering the stallion's breeding, the French offer certainly did not appear too high, when one remembers that foreign military commissions and breeders have paid in the desert anything up to three thousand pounds gold for blue-blooded stallions.

I asked the scribe to submit my offer to his *sheykh* up to one thousand pounds gold. I also declared myself [431] ready to make the customary presents to the *katib* (secretary) and to the slave who had looked after the stallion from birth.

That same day I sat with Mishal and his son Naif and 574 their friends until late into the night. By the light of 231 the campfire I showed them photographs of Arab horses, 572 among them the stallions and mares which I had bought from the stud of Lady Anne Blunt's daughter in England, for the ranch in California.

"Is it known to thee," asked Mishal, "that Lord Blunt and my father Faris formed a blood brotherhood fifty

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Fetching Water

in of firewood goes on, and the girls and children get in a two- or three-mile walk every morning. It is good for them and makes them strong, straight and fit to bear children later on, and they know it.

Two hours later they return, each bearing an enormous load of *'arfaj* bushes on their heads, and followed by the tired little mites who have gone with them. In the meantime the woman of the tent has not been idle. She, with her sister, or old mother if she has one to help her, has been sunning the family bedding (*lahdf*) and putting it away, or has been cleaning pots and pans from the previous night's meal and has tidied up the tent. She has sent off the spare shepherd to go and fetch water from the wells they have just vacated, perhaps 10 miles back. He takes for the purpose a couple of male camels kept back from the herd, on whom he loads up either two large camel water-skins, or four goatskins. This will suffice for the needs of the tent and its neighbours. Should a small *thamila* exist near them, as is often the case after rains, the daughters of the house will once again be sent off with goatskins (*gurab*) to collect the water—(a *thamila* is a small supply of water lying under the surface of a dry, sandy water-course which does not sink deep and disappear completely, because it lies on subsurface rock or clay). The girls scratch away the sand to a depth of two or three feet to reach the brown, muddy liquid. They ladle it into skins by means of a small cup (*jiddf*) of tamarisk wood, and keep it on one side for drinking purposes only. The water is at first opaque and yellowish, but the silt soon settles.

To keep the water-skins cool during the day, a bed of *'arfaj* bush is made just outside the women's quarters, and all skins are laid on the bed.

By now it is time to prepare the midday meal. If the family is a fairly prosperous one, rice will be cooked and made tasty with *semen*, clarified butter of sheep's milk, and all will sit down and eat their fill. If the family is a poor one, there will be no meal till sundown.

After the midday meal, the woman of the house will first clean the cooking pots, and then start weaving any cloth that may be required for the tent, or if the tent is complete she will work on a *gdas* or *marsaf*, which in due course she will sell when she visits a town to do *mugdhilah*. A *gdas* if well and artistically made will bring her in Rs.45 to Rs.50—a vast sum of money for a Badawin family.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

together a few pence to buy a hawk, all go in for the sport. In fact, every self-respecting person owns, or hopes to own, his falcon.

The two most commonly used hawks are known locally as the *Hurr* or *Hurra* and the *Shdhin*.* The former is the aristocrat of the two, and fetches a much higher price.

The best hawks come from the Persian littoral, and nowadays fetch prices of from Rs.50 to Rs.150 a bird. Both *hurr* and *shdhin* are also caught by Badawin hunters clever at snaring. The islands of Bubiyan and Warba, west of the Shatt al 'Arab Delta, are favourite snaring grounds for Kuwait Badawin, and I believe the Dhaharan peninsula, south of Qatif, is another.

On first reaching Arabia the *hubara* makes for the small new green shoots of grass that come up with the early rains or *wasm* season (October). As the rainy season develops and grass comes up everywhere, the birds scatter and proceed deeper and deeper into the interior, until they are found as far inland in the north as the Syrian desert, and in the south round about Riyadh and the oasis of Jabrin. Except in small numbers the birds do not penetrate much west of this line.

Round about Zubair, Kuwait and further south as far as Qatar, the birds are very plentiful throughout the winter, and many thousands of birds are each season killed for food by the local Arabs. In Kuwait the shaikh generally bags about two thousand birds every cold weather, and the combined members of the Al Sa'ud get about the same number in Najd proper, as also do the Shaikhs of Bahrain, both on their own islands as well as on the mainland where they regularly hunt.

The best trainers of falcons round about Kuwait and Riyadh are the Rashaida tribesmen, and in the south the Al Murra tribe. Both seem to have a very special aptitude for turning out skilled birds.

A good hawk will only kill four to five *hubara* in one day, an exceptional hawk has been known to kill as many as seven to eight. I have known "Peter", the priceless hawk of the Shaikh of Kuwait, kill as many as eleven birds in a day, but this is unique in the annals of the chase.

* *Hurr* is apparently the name given to both "Saker" and "Lagger" falcons, and *Shdhin* is clearly the Shahin falcon of Natural History.